

FOREWORD

The impact of unification on Germany's politics, economy, and society continues to reverberate more than a decade after October 1990. The challenge of achieving a level of fiscal equalization among the Länder remains a daunting task well after more than a trillion deutsche marks (2 marks=1 euro) in support have been transferred from West to East. Political parties and political behavior in the East and West remain marked by differences, as can be seen in the continuing and even growing support (at least until the fall of 2002) for the former communists in the East and the virtual absence of support for the Greens or the Free Democrats in the new Länder. And as the European Union begins to include new Central and Eastern European members, the strains on the political, legal and social fabric of German society are reflected in the debates over unemployment, immigration policies, and the future of social security.

Germany remains a fascinating laboratory for those interested in examining the development of a larger Federal Republic challenged by both old and new problems after unification. The American Institute for Contemporary German Studies (AICGS) has been closely following the transformation of the political and constitutional environment in Germany since 1990. Along the way, we worked with many of the scholars who are represented in this book. In February 2001 we asked them to join us for a look back and a look forward in evaluating the issues and challenges that Germany has been confronting in its efforts to take advantage of one of the most exciting opportunities in its history. The analyses found in this book provide the reader with helpful tools not only to review the last ten years but also to anticipate the second decade of a unified Germany.

I wish to express my appreciation to the scholars who contributed to this book, and in particular to Professor Arthur Gunlicks, who organized the conference held in Washington, D.C., on 16 and 17 February 2001, and also took on the demanding task of editing this volume. We are grateful for his tenacity and dedication and for his own insightful contributions in this collection. AICGS would also like to express its special thanks to the main sponsor of the conference and the publication, *Die Zeit Stiftung Ebelin und Gerd Bucerius*. We are also grateful for additional support for the conference from Lufthansa and the German Marshall Fund of the United States.

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